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The viral etiology of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Proof for low-grade CNS viral infections

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) is a medically unexplained disorder which presents with severe fatigue, flu-like symptoms, and neuropsychological impairments, which can include mental “fogginess”, decreased concentration, poor memory, low motivation, diminished mood, and increased duration of sleep. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that between 1 and 4 million patients exist in the United States alone, although less than 20% have been so diagnosed. Although CFS was initially thought to be a psychosomatic illness, research has recently shifted to determining the biological basis to the disorder. In recent years, numerous studies have demonstrated a link between chronic viral infections and CFS. Viruses such as Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV), Cytomegalovirus (CMV), and several herpes viruses (e.g., Herpes 1, 6, 7 – HSV-1, HHV-6, HHV-7) cause or contribute to the symptoms of a large percentage of patient with CFS. These infections are generally not acute, but represent intracellular reactivation of an old infection; hence, an elevation of IgM antibodies is typically not seen with reactivated infections of EBV, CMV, or HHV-6. Furthermore, a recent study demonstrated conclusively that HHV-6 can invade and replicate within human brain cells based

on the finding of HHV-6 virus in Cerebellar Purkinje cells of a large number of human brains. These data will be reviewed and the treatment of CFS as a viral illness will be outlined. Clinical data from over 150 patients with CFS will be presented. The distribution of active viral infections, treatment protocols, response rates, and stepped therapy to more aggressive antiviral therapies will be described.

Speaker Biography

Theodore A Henderson is founder of Neuro-Luminance Brain Health Centers, Inc. and director of The Synaptic Space. He has extensive training and experience to the practice of Psychiatry and brain sciences. He trained in Psychiatry at the prestigious Barnes/Jewish Hospitals at Washington University/St. Louis and Child & Adolescent Psychiatry at the University of Colorado. He also has training in Radiology, Nuclear Medicine, and the genetics of psychiatry. He established his private practice in Centennial Colorado in July of 2000. He has achieved an advanced level of understanding of psychopharmacology, referred to as Master Psychopharmacologist. He lectures regularly and has written or published on unique treatment approaches to depression, chronic fatigue, ADHD, and anxiety. He also has taught courses on neuroimaging. He is a guest editor for a number of journals, including JAMA, Journal of Neuropsychiatry, and the Journal of Nuclear Medicine.

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